

February 19, 2016

Dear Chair Doherty and Members of the House Education Committee,

On behalf of the English Language Learners Advocates Coalition, we strongly urge you to support SB 1564 A.

We believe that these changes are necessary to ensure that annual reporting around English Language Learner (ELL) expenditures and ELL student progress is consistent and available to the public. These annual reports, in addition to the statewide system of targeted supports, will help Oregon Department of Education (ODE), school districts, and parents and community members analyze our progress and work collectively to improve academic outcomes for all ELL students.

Oregon's ELL student population has grown to 57,153. Oregon's 2014-15 data show that our current education system is not serving our ELL students well.

- Only 51% of ELL students graduate high school on time, compared to 75% of non-ELL students;
- By the end of 8th grade, 5% of ELL students met the standards in English Language Arts and math;
- Just 12% of ELL students met the English Language Arts and math standards by the end of 4th grade.

We still have a lot of more work to do. During the 2015 session, we worked with many parents, community leaders, educators, school board members, school administrators, advocates and lawmakers to unanimously pass HB 3499—90-0. HB 3499 creates a system of supports and progressive interventions for districts identified as not meeting the needs of their ELL students; focuses on long-term strategies for helping ELL students move towards meeting the academic standards and English language proficiency; and directs ODE to develop a uniform budget coding and reporting system.

Please support SB 1564 A, so that we can keep the momentum moving forward and ensure that all of Oregon's ELL students get the support they need to succeed.

Thank you for your work on this important issue.

Signed,
The ELL Advocates Coalition



Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality